DEATH

763 If it seemed certain that a person was going to die, he was removed from the house so it would not have to be destroyed. There was no avoidance of the dying: rather all the relatives, particularly women, gathered and might begin to wail even before death had occurred. Immediately after death, ritual wailing began and lasted until the body had been interred. Women wailed the most constantly, but men also joined them. The wail consisted in repeating the kinship term in regular rhythm and on a high note so "it sounded like singing" (32).

764 In deaths other than those from enemy wounds the corpse was interred. In the foothills, where digging was difficult, it was placed in a cave or a cleft in the rocks, any openings being filled up with stones. Where no cave was available, a rudimentary cliff dwelling was made, one side of the hill being used as a wall while a complementary wall was built up out of dry masonry, so that the whole formed a circle four feet or so in diameter. The corpse, with his effects was seated inside it and the whole roofed over with boughs and brush, weighted down with stones. The work was done by all the men of the geographic unit, the younger ones fetching poles for the roof, sometimes from a great distance, the older ones building up the stone work. This was the only stonework ever used by the Papago except in occasional mountain storehouses.

They made such a grave if it was at all possible, even carrying the corpse a long distance to rocky country, on a rough litter made of cactus ribs. But if rocky country was too far, they dug a pit, six or seven feet deep, with a niche at one side (1, 20). In this the corpse was seated but the grave was not filled with earth. Instead it was roofed over like the house or the rock grave.

The body was placed in the sitting position used in life: a man had his hands around his knees; a woman had her knees to the right. The dead wore his best regalia and paint. A warrior had his headdress and was painted for war; Enemy Slayers had the top part of the face black and the lower part white as they did during purification; ceremonial officiants wore the appropriate paint, but their costumes were generally hereditary and were not buried with them.

Property was laid in the grave, according to some; just outside it, according to others. A man had his weapons, a woman her pots

3: Underhill E-5 (1931-1935) 1936
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I took my little girl with me when we went to dance and sing for the River People. Every year or two we went, we three or four villages that were relatives.

Once we went to The Spring, and Begging for Yucca Fruit made the songs. Then we went to Sacaton and my father made them. The River People came to us, too, and we all went and camped at the village where they were to sing. They sang at Mesquite Root, my father's village, and [201] he put into the singer's hands cow manure and horse manure. That meant he would give them a cow and a horse. Then we went to the Narrow Place and held a great harvest festival, and my husband was one of the singers. A good time we had, roaming over the land.

Once, when my husband and I were away working, word came that my father was sick. All the family came back to Mesquite Root, but the medicine man could not help him. We all began to cry, right then: "Haya, my father!" "Haya, my elder brother!" "Haya, my husband!" It is a sort of tune. We cried all night, but he died.

We did not bury him in a cave in the rocks as our people used to do. We had been up and down to Mexico, and had seen the priests and learned many things. We laid him down and dug a grave. We dressed him in clothes, a good shirt and trousers and sandals and a red headband around his hair. We gave him a blanket and pillow, too, for the grave. Because he was an Enemy Slayer his face was painted, black to the nose and white below. His younger brother did that, for he was an Enemy Slayer, too, and had the right.

All the men of our family dug the grave, and then carried him out and put him there. They put in his blanket and pillow, because we did not sleep on mats any more. And his leather pouch, they put in, and the sticks he had for games and his bow and arrows and his good quiver of wild cat skin. Then his brother spoke: "We put you here. Stay and don't come back to frighten us." My mother said: "Make yourself at home. Be happy. Don't come back to break up my good dreams." She was crying. Then we called him again. "Haya, my father!" "Haya, my elder brother!" "Haya, my husband!"

All the relatives called him. After that, we never said his name, José María. When we talked about him we said my father-gone, my elder brother-gone, my husband-gone. To hear the name would make us feel too bad. And nobody ever said that name to us because my brothers would get angry.

We divided his horses, and my sister and I each got two. My brothers and my mother got more. My brothers took the house down and moved